6.3 Wet Meadows

Calamagrostis canadensis Eastern Herbaceous Vegetation [Provisional] (Canada Bluejoint Eastern Meadow)

COMMON NAME	Canada Reedgrass Eastern Herbaceous Vegetation
SYNONYM	Canada Bluejoint Eastern Meadow
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Herbaceous Vegetation (V)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Perennial graminoid vegetation (V.A)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (V.A.5.N)
FORMATION	Seasonally flooded temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5.N.k)
ALLIANCE	CALAMAGROSTIS CANADENSIS SEASONALLY FLOODED HERBACEOUS ALLIANCE

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 2

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM PALUSTRINE

RANGE

Voyageurs National Park

This type occurs predominately in old beaver meadows or along slow moving streams throughout the park.

Globally

This association is widespread throughout the eastern United States and adjacent southern Canada.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

Voyageurs National Park

This type occurs predominately in old beaver meadows or along slow moving streams. In beaver meadows, this community is found on relatively dry sites and often occurs on the upland edge of more recent beaver floodings or completely colonizing older, drier beaver meadows. Soils usually contain deep, dense clay which prevents or slows drainage. A shallow layer of mineral soil or well decomposed peat may occur over the clay. In wetter conditions of this type, standing water may be present in low areas. In these situations, tussocky microtopography is often present. Water channels and standing or fallen dead trees are frequently present. The water regime is temporarily to seasonally flooded.

Globally

Stands occur on the floodplains of small streams, in poorly drained depressions, beaver meadows, and lakeshores. Soils are typically mineral soil or well-decomposed peat, with a thick root mat (Harris *et al.* 1996). In northern Minnesota, the water regime varies between temporarily and seasonally flooded (M. Smith personal communication 1999).

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Voyageurs National Park

Stratum	Species
Graminoid	*Calamagrostis canadensis*

Globally

Stratum	Species
Short shrub	*Alnus incana*
Graminoid	*Calamagrostis canadensis, Scirpus cyperinus, Carex rostrata, Carex stricta*
Forb	*Eupatorium maculatum*

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Voyageurs National Park

Calamagrostis canadensis

Globally

Calamagrostis canadensis, Scirpus cyperinus, Carex rostrata, Carex stricta, *Eupatorium maculatum*

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Voyageurs National Park

This community is characterized by a continuous herbaceous cover of *Calamagrostis canadensis*. *Alnus incana, Betula pumila,* or *Salix* spp. infrequently colonize these sites at <25% cover. Other herbaceous species are usually present but typically make up very little cover. These often include *Scirpus cyperinus, Carex lacustris, Eupatorium maculatum, Typha latifolia,* and *Campanula aparinoides*. Some stands are very species poor and contain as few as three species. This occurs when *Calamagrostis canadensis* cover is very dense and a thick thatch layer accumulates. Water channels occasionally occur within these stands and can contain species typical of wetter conditions, including *Calla palustris, Cicuta bulbifera,* and *Sagittaria* spp.

Globally

Graminoid cover is typically dense, and can form hummocky microtopography. *Calamagrostis canadensis* dominates, often in almost pure stands or with tall sedges, such as *Carex aquatilis, Carex lacustris, Carex rostrata*, and *Carex stricta*. In fen transitions, *Carex lasiocarpa* can be present. *Glyceria grandis, Poa palustris, Scirpus cyperinus*, and *Typha latifolia* are sometimes abundant. Forbs include *Campanula aparinoides, Epilobium leptophyllum, Eupatorium maculatum, Iris versicolor, Polygonum amphibium*, and *Potentilla palustris* (Harris *et al.* 1996).

CONSERVATION RANK G?.

DATABASE CODE CEGL005174

COMMENTS

Voyageurs National Park

Diagnostic features of the type include a herbaceous layer with continuous cover of *Calamagrostis canadensis*. This type is analogous to Ontario's W13 (Harris *et al.* 1996). This community often occurs adjacent to, and readily grades into the Northern Sedge Wet Meadow (CEGL002257). The Northern Sedge Wet Meadow usually occurs in the wetter areas of beaver meadows. The Bluejoint Eastern Meadow can also, though more rarely, grade into the Midwest Cattail Marsh (CEGL002233). The Speckled Alder Swamp (CEGL002381) and the Dogwood-Pussy Willow Swamp (CEGL002186) can occasionally invade a Bluejoint Eastern Meadow site. In these circumstances, a shrub layer of > 25% cover distinguish these shrub communities from the Bluejoint Eastern Meadow.

The Bluejoint Eastern Meadow most commonly occurs in beaver meadows. Constant beaver activity can alter local hydrology and, over time, cause this community to grade into other communities.

Globally

In northern Minnesota, this type commonly occurs in beaver meadows. Constant beaver activity can alter local hydrology and, over time, cause this community to grade into other communities (M. Smith personal communication 1999).

REFERENCES

Harris, A. G., S. C. McMurray, P. W. C. Uhlig, J. K. Jeglum, R. F. Foster, and G. D. Racey. 1996. Field guide to the wetland ecosystem classification for northwestern Ontario. Ont. Minist. Nat. Resour., Northwest Sci. Tech. Field Guide FG-01.Thunder Bay, Ont. 74 p.

Note:

This association is found in two different map classes:

1) Canada Bluejoint Eastern Meadow
2) Wet Meadow / Fen Mosaic / Complex